

accused of arrant cowardice. He did not dare to attack his contemporaries in the French language and in a French journal, it was said; he sought a foreign country and a foreign tongue for his venomous outpourings.

His reply to this accusation was characteristic. He offered "Le Figaro" the original French manuscript of his article — which differed in many respects from the *resuinS* issued by the Swiss review — and "Le Figaro," which had denounced some of his remarks as unprintable, speedily inserted the entire paper in its literary supplement.¹ The uproar in literary circles then became terrific. Among

those whom -Zola assailed were Hector Malot, Ferdinand Fabre, Octave Feuillet, Victor Cherbuliez, Edmond About, Louis Ulbach, Erckmann-Chatrian, Paul Fe'val, Jules Claretie, and Le*on Oladel; and it was pointed out that the only writers whom he praised or spared were those whose works were issued by his own publisher, M. Charpentier! Of course, said the quidnuncs, he must have been paid for this service; M. Charpentier could not have given him less than ten thousand francs for his article, though if M. Calmann-LeVy, for instance, had offered him twenty thousand, he would doubtless have written up that publisher's writers instead of abusing them.

As already mentioned, the article in

question was in
some measure unjust, for it assumed *a priori*
that only the
Naturalist school of fiction was entitled to
live; but at
the same time it contained some sound
criticism. Nobody
nowadays would deny the proposition that
Hector Maiot,
in whom at one time many hopes had
centred, never
produced a really great book; that Jules
Claretie also, in

¹ "Le Figaro," Supplement Littéraire, December 22,
1878-